

Appl. No. 09/884,805
Amdt. dated 5th January 2004
Reply to Office communication mailed 08-Mar-04

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration Requested

The applicant has given careful consideration to the grounds of the examiner in rejecting various claims under consideration under 35 USC §112, second paragraph. The minor amendments made to the claims herein, enjoy full support from applicants' specification, drawings, claims and abstract as filed. No new matter has been added. For the following detailed reasons, applicants respectfully solicit reconsideration of the examiner's rejections.

Claim Rejections 35 USC § 112

Applicants' claims 22 – 33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, for the following reasons:

- In the second paragraph of claims 22, and 28, it is unclear which "...top surface..." applicant is referring to.; and
- The wording used in lines 2-3 of claims 23, and 32 is very confusing, and should be rewritten.

Per the examiner's suggestion, applicants have amended the claims to address the examiners comments: for purposes of clarification, the word **substrate** has been added before the element "outer top surface" (as identified in the preamble of each of the claims amended herein). Concerning the examiner's second comment, it is believed that the concern is with the wording of claims 23 and 31, *rather than* 32, as lines 2-3 of claims 23 and 31 use similar phrasing. Therefore, a minor amendment has been made to each of claims 23 and 31 to address the examiner's concern. In support of this minor amendment to claims 23 and 31 — "placing a shelf area of said device in contact with a perimeter of the substrate outer top surface" — a few passages of applicants' specification have been reproduced below, for handy reference.

In connection with features in their FIG. 2, applicants' explain, on pg 17 of their specification:

Although not critical, shelf-area 59 (here, it's ring-shaped) of device 42 is in contact with the perimeter of substrate top layer 50. If spacing 55 has been appropriately maintained as contemplated hereby, the selective etching of localized areas 57, 53 with device 42 will be driven by the high density plasma etchants forming forming/reacting within channels 46, 48.

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And further on pg. 19 of their specification, applicants' state:

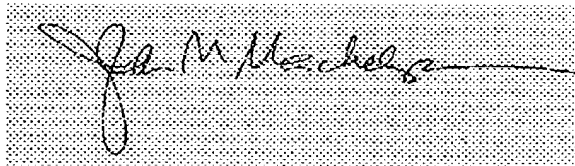
At the shelf-area identified as 29a on this sectional view [FIG. 3], device 12a is in contact with the perimeter of substrate 20. In the event substrate 20 is an IC wafer, its perimeter will be circular as will be the contact shelf-area (29a) of device 12a.

The sectional view of plasma confinement device 72 in FIG. 4 has been taken along 4-4 of FIG. 5. Although not critical, device 72 is in contact with both chuck 34 (at shelf-area 75) and the perimeter of wafer 20 (at shelf-area 73).

Summary/Conclusion and Request for Reconsideration

Each of applicants' pending claims 22 – 33 overcome the examiner's §112 rejection, and as such, contain allowable, patentable subject matter. Therefore, favorable reconsideration is respectfully solicited. Please do not hesitate to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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RE-submitted per Office request as dated this: 22nd day of March 2004
Fort Collins, Colorado